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ADVOCATE OF PEACE.

JAN. AND FEB., 1851.

ONE PROOF OF SUCCESS IN THE CAUSE OF PEACE.

It is more difficult in this cause than in almost any other, to ascertain precisely how much has already been accomplished. It lacks the usual criteria of success, the proofs and measurement of progress found in most enterprises, whether of benevolence or reform. We cannot speak of the pledges taken, as in the temperance movement; of the missionaries sent forth, the churches organized, and the converts received into their bosom, as in the cause of missions; or of the publications circulated, as in Tract and Bible Societies. The success may be as real, but is not so easily seen, nor so readily admitted. This results in part from the nature of the case; because the effect of all our efforts is intentionally diffused like leaven through the community, and embodied in their altered tone of thought and feeling. Now, such changes are necessarily so gradual, that the unreflecting will not perceive them, the skeptical will not acknowledge them, and the mass will heedlessly attribute them, when too obvious for doubt or denial, to the ordinary agencies at work for the improvement of mankind. They may be very honest in these egregious mistakes; for they are generally so ignorant of what the cause of peace has actually done, as to resemble the man who should stoutly contend, that the triumphs of temperance have resulted, not at all from the special efforts of its associated friends, but entirely from the general influences of Christianity diffused through the community, without any specific application or reference to this particular department of reform.

It would be easy to fill a volume with proofs in detail of the progress which the cause of peace has already made; but let us take a single one in the present state of our own militia system, contrasted with what it was when the friends of peace began their efforts thirty-five years ago. It was then in its full vigor and glory; but now its drills are, in a few States, entirely suspended; in most, very much neglected, and in all, held in great comparative disrepute. In half of New England, there are no trainings

at all ; and in the other half, they are less and less frequent, and tending surely to ultimate abandonment. Some of us can remember when an eighth or tenth of the entire population used to perform military drills from four to six times every year, and so large a portion of the community attended some of these trainings, as to suspend for the time nearly all kinds of business, except what was connected with the muster-field. How altered now ! Then, the militia was an idol of the people ; now, it is an object of general neglect, if not of contempt. Then it strutted a very peacock before the popular gaze ; now, it more resembles the dead carcase of that peacock stripped of her gaudy plumage, and rotting in the gutter, without even the respect of a decent burial. It has become, with the mass of sober, respectable people, a bye-word, a loathing, and a scorn. Once it challenged the admiration of all ; now, there are very few to show it reverence or passing attention, except politicians eager for votes, and editors anxious to get or keep subscribers. We doubt whether, in the country at large, one quarter, if more than one-tenth part of the time and money is now devoted to the militia, that was some thirty or forty years ago.

Now, estimate the pecuniary gain secured by this change. Take the case of Massachusetts. More than ten years ago, the legislature, after a long series of pompous but futile efforts by military men among us to galvanize the system into some show of life, abolished all requisitions for militia drills, but permitted any that should choose to organize themselves into volunteer companies, to the number of ten thousand men, and appropriated \$50,000 to pay each one five dollars a year for a given number of trainings. This was a compromise between the friends and the opponents of the militia system ; but even this " sop to Cerberus " has never induced much more than half the prescribed number of 10,000 to enter the service. There is hardly a militia company in any part of our State, except in a few of our cities and large towns ; and even in these, " the noble fellows," as editors have got into a stereotyped way of calling them, one might well think, in biting irony, are found to be, for the most part, apprentices, journeymen and clerks, the flood-wood of society.

Now, suppose we have, under the present relic or shred of our old militia system, 6,000 men training twice a year, instead of 100,000 that, but for the change of public opinion, would, in our present population of nearly a million, have been in the old habit of training five or six times a year. Few volunteers will admit, that the five dollars received by them from the State for training only twice, fully compensates them for their loss of time and money ; but, even at this low rate, the total for 100,000 men would be half a million dollars. If the old tone of feeling on this subject had continued, some 100,000 men would now train, perhaps, five times a year ; and, if we suppose each training to absorb an average of one day and a half at a dollar a day, the incidental expenses, and derangement of business, to cost as much more, and the equipments only five dollars for each man, the sum total for the whole State would still be no less than \$2,000,000 a year, or nearly twenty millions during the last ten years for Massachusetts alone ! And how much has been expended meanwhile for the cause of peace in our whole country ?

Not more than \$60,000 in thirty-five years ; and the saving by this pittance has been, for a single State, fifteen or twenty millions in ten years, besides a flood of moral evils incomparably worse, which it has confessedly prevented. Some three hundred times as much saved in this single item to Massachusetts alone in ten years, as all that has been spent for the cause of peace throughout our country in thirty-five years !

Extend this estimate, with every possible abatement, to the whole country, and the result is astounding. The entire militia of our thirty-one States has been reported of late at some 3,000,000 ; and the cost of their trainings, on the same basis of calculation, would be \$60,000,000 a year. When our militia was reckoned at 1,500,000, one of our ablest and most accurate writers estimated their annual cost, in one way and another, at full \$50,000,000 ! Reduce our own estimate fifty per cent. ; and, if we reckon the present waste of time and money upon the militia system so high as only half the proportion of former days, the cause of peace, or whatever may have changed public opinion on this subject, will be found to be now saving our entire republic fifteen or twenty millions a year, and Massachusetts alone, a million or more ; five times as much saved to a single State in one year, as the cause of peace has expended throughout all Christendom, in one-third of a century.

So much for the pecuniary proof of our success ; and a much stronger argument of a moral nature might be adduced. If you deem these estimates too high, you may reduce them to the utmost point that your own views can demand or permit ; and still the result will prove a degree of success in the cause of peace, far beyond what even its most sanguine friends have generally claimed or suspected. What enterprise of benevolence or reform can furnish evidence of greater, or even equal success, in proportion to the means used ? It would be much below the truth to say, that every dollar thus far spent in this cause, has already saved a thousand, if not tens of thousands, to our own country, and to Christendom at large.

Now, let no one suppose we present this view as the strong-hold of our cause. No ; we deem it the lowest and weakest of all our arguments ; but it certainly is a fair, unanswerable reply to a class of mercenary reasoners, the small, short-sighted logicians of the counter and the ledger, whom Franklin would call " penny-wise and pound-foolish " for treating the cause of peace as a bad investment. Its chief claims to the support of religious, Christian men, rest on far higher grounds ; but we still insist that even this partial view of its pecuniary bearings may well challenge the respectful and earnest attention of those who estimate the value of everything by dollars and cents. There is no economy comparable to that of peace, and no investments that yield, in the long run, so large profits of general good, as contributions to this eminently philanthropic and Christian enterprise.

A Legacy of War. — Dr. Jones, in Manchester, N. H., lately cut a Mexican bullet, weighing nearly an ounce, from the neck of a young man, by the name of Osgood, who was engaged in the Mexican war at the storming of Chapultepec, when the ball, more than two years before, was received in the front side of his neck, and passed nearly through to the opposite side.